before any pesticide is registered by Ministry of Agriculture under Insecticides Act, 1968, for use upon any crop.

There is a considerable evidence that usage of pesticide in agricultural crops has steadily declined during 2004-05 to 40,672 tonnes as compared to the consumption of pesticides in agriculture, 80,000 tonnes in 1984-85.

For ensuring safe use of pesticides, the Ministry of Agriculture provides extension services and training on safe use of pesticides through its Farmers Field Schools (FFS). The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation follows the policy of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for managing pest problems which is environment and ecology friendly. It combines cultural, mechanical and biological pest control techniques with minimum dependence on chemical pesticides. Promotion of Integrated Pest Management(IPM) would result in reduction of the problems of pesticides residues.

Vegetable samples collected in Delhi have not been detected with pesticide residues above the tolerance limit. In 1117 samples collected in the rest of the country, residues have been detected above tolerance limit in 3.8% of the samples.

(c) With the objective to collect, collate and analyze data of pesticide residues in agriculture, animal produce and food commodities at the national level, the Ministry of Agriculture has launched in 2005, as a Central Sector Scheme, "Monitoring of Pesticide Residues" in agricultural, animal and food commodities at the national level for which a sum of Rs. 10 crore has been provided for the Scheme, during 2007-08. The scheme provides for strengthening the identified pesticides residues testing laboratories and getting the samples of selected commodities analyzed for pesticide residues and other harmful elements.

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), under the Ministry of Commerce have developed Residue Monitoring Plans for exports of the commodities such as fresh grapes, gherkins, egg products, groundnuts and honey to control use of pesticides residues in food products which are having the export potential. Besides evolving a Scheme for Laboratory Recognition for commercial testing of products from the field level to the export stuffing to enable the exporters to get their products tested for residues of pesticides, drugs and contaminants, it launched Certification Mark "Quality Produce of India" extended to meat products, basmati rice and Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.

Nurses-patient ratio

1460. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Ministry of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the nursing staff-patient ratio in the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that the nursing staff-patient ratio in the country is much lower than that of international standards; and

(c) if so, the proposal of Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI) (a) The over all nurse bed ratio varies from 1:3 to 1:10 depending on the bed strength of the units/hospitals.

(b) and (c) As per World Health Organization there is no standard ratio of nurse to hospital beds. It depends greatly on patient need for nursing, support to nurses in giving patient care and their expected roles and responsibilities. In order to make improvement in the nursing services, a sum of Rs. 82 crores has been allocated during the Tenth Plan period under the Development of Nursing Services. The following activities were undertaken during the Tenth Plan period.

(i) Opening of College of Nursing at JIPMER, Pondicherry

(ii) To upgrade Schools of Nursing into Colleges of Nursing attached to Dr. RML Hospital, Safdarjung Hospital, LHMC and Associated Hospital.

(iii) Strengthening of RAK College of Nursing as a "Centre of Excellence".

(iv) One time financial assistance to the State Governments for upgrading Schools of Nursing into Colleges of Nursing attached to Medical Colleges.

(v) Organizing Continuing Education Programme for Nursing personnel to upgrade the knowledge and skills.

(vi) In the development of strategic frame work for nursing for Eleventh Plan, it is proposed to open ANM and GNM nursing schools under NRHM in those districts where schools are not available.

Women death due to pregnancy

1461. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Ministry of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that one woman dies at every 7 minutes from a pregnancy related cause;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what is the maternal mortality ratio in the country; and

(d) how do we bring down this death rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI):, (a) to (d) Yes. Based on the official estimates of Registrar General of India (RGI), Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) for India is 301 per 100,000 live births (SRS 2001-03) [Refer to the Statement appended to the anwer to USQ 1435 pt (a) to (c)] This translates into an absolute number of maternal deaths of approximately 77,000 per year or in other words one woman dying every seven minutes due to complications related to pregnancy and child birth.

As per the latest survey reports (SRS - 2001-03), the reasons for high Maternal Mortality in the country are - Hemorrhage - 38%, Sepsis - 11%, Abortion - 8%, Obstructed Labour - 5%, Hypertensive Disorders - 5% and Others - 34%.